

# State Announces Almost \$1.5 Million in District, Charter Grants for Innovative Improvement Projects

The Delaware Department of Education is announcing 14 grants to schools and districts across the state. Totalling almost \$1.5 million, they will fund innovative practices and projects proposed by teachers and education leaders to support increased academic student growth.

“As our state raises expectations for student achievement, we are looking to our teachers and school leaders for innovative ways to meet those higher standards. They understand how to help all of our young people get the skills they need to compete for colleges and careers,” Gov. Jack Markell said. “I applaud the recipients of these grants for their commitment to finding the most effective ways to give students the best chance to reach their potential.”

State officials selected the winners from among 74 applications for the new grant opportunity, which was announced in June<<http://www.doe.k12.de.us/news/2013/0624.shtml>>.

“These grants are intended to bring true innovation into the classroom and to our children by supporting promising projects that have been developed and will be led by our teachers and leaders. The educators working closest with our children have told us what their students need,” Secretary of Education Mark Murphy said. “We are committed to supporting their work in this way and will be following their progress closely. We look forward to learning from the strong practices demonstrated through this program.”

The purpose of the program is to:

- 1) Provide opportunity for innovative and promising teacher-led projects that drive improved student outcomes
- 2) Provide opportunity for innovative and promising projects for strong Common Core implementation and assessment
- 3) Provide opportunity for innovative and promising projects around student supports and dramatically improved school climate; and/or
- 4) Provide opportunity for innovative and promising strategies to accelerate underachieving groups of students

The \$1,486,143 in grants, funded from department school improvement money, will be for implementation during the 2013-2014 school year. The grant recipient will be expected to provide information on the outcome of the practice or initiative to other districts and charter schools.

The awardees are:

- Gallaher Elementary School (Christina School District): \$116,029 for GOALS (Gallaher's Outstanding Approach to Learning and Student-Improvement) Program, which will target the necessary prerequisite skills in reading and mathematics to allow all students to have equitable access to the skills needed to master the Common Core State Standards. For example, in reading those skills include decoding, fluency and basic comprehension.
- POLYTECH High School (POLYTECH School District): \$143,000 for Specific & Innovative Improvement Practices at POLYTECH High School, including instructional interventions, professional development and social-emotional supports. Specifically, the grant will fund: SpringBoard Enrichment Period curriculum training and materials; Lexile appropriate and Common Core State Standards-aligned trade books; Common

Core State Standards teacher resources, professional development and site visits; Career and Technical Education programming development; and interactive technology.

- North Laurel Elementary and Laurel Intermediate schools (Laurel School District): \$149,974 for i-Impact, which will provide student-specific skill instruction, reinforcement and remediation to all students in grades 2 to 6 via technology (iPods and iPads) in school and at home. About 1,050 students will benefit.
- BRINC (Brandywine, Indian River, New Castle County Vo-Tech and Colonial school districts): \$600,000 for Linking to the Future, supporting personalized learning opportunities for students at Brandywine's Brandywine, Concord and Mt. Pleasant high schools; Colonial's William Penn High School; New Castle County Vo-Tech's Delcastle, Hodgson, Howard and St. Georges high schools; and Indian River's Indian River and Sussex Central high schools. BRINC envisions that students will be able to compare data about their progress against their learning goals, be exposed to new blended learning strategies for anywhere, anytime learning and have more options for non-traditional learning, such as online courses.
- Brandywine, Concord and Mount Pleasant high schools (Brandywine School District): \$26,500 for Increasing Student College and Career Readiness in the Courses of Biology and AP Biology, funding texts and professional development for teachers and classroom materials for students to offer students a true inquiry approach in their biology instruction.
- Chipman Middle School (Lake Forest School District): \$17,714 for Engaging Students in History through Common Core, a classroom project that will provide students with opportunities to read and analyze primary and secondary source materials to engage them in the study of U.S. history through the eyes of the people who actually lived it and witnessed it.

- Stanton Middle School (Red Clay Consolidated School District): \$45,083 for Implementing a Trauma-Informed System of Care for Stanton Middle School, aiming to improve school culture and social competence of students by training teachers in The Heart of Learning and Teaching: Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success framework and coaching in the collaborative problem solving process. The grant also will fund universal screening for behavioral deficits and targeted intervention planning for all students.
- A.I. duPont middle and high schools (Red Clay Consolidated School District): \$39,000 for A.I. duPont Astronomy Cooperative Initiative, creating a cooperative high school/middle school partnership to allow rising 7th and 8th graders the middle school to work with students at the high school to create public presentations focused on Earth resources and astronomy. They will utilize the planetarium at the middle school and observatory on the roof of the high school, which will receive a new dome.
- Warner Elementary School (Red Clay Consolidated School District): \$24,099 for WIZ (Warner Inspiration Zone), expanding the school's fourth and fifth grade club period to second and third grades. Last year's clubs focused on topics such as math, LEGO Robotics, Science Olympiad, poetry, Spanish and agriculture.
- Brittingham and Shields elementary schools (Cape Henlopen School District): \$48,012 for Bridging the Gaps through Blended Learning, creating a district consortium to help close a socio-economic divide in the district. Focusing on fifth grade, the project will support teacher collaboration and training. Students will use digital media and blended learning.
- A.I. duPont, Dickinson, McKean, Conrad, Cab Calloway, Delaware Military Academy and Wilmington Charter high schools (Red Clay Consolidated School District): \$70,500

for 11th grade SAT Prep Evening Program, offering free SAT prep classes to all juniors in the district over a 10-week period beginning in January and concluding before the state SAT administration in April. Transportation and materials will be provided. The program will run in five locations on different nights so students have a choice.

- H.B. duPont Middle School (Red Clay Consolidated School District): \$32,710 for CELEB (Cognitive and Emotional Learning and Esteem Building) Program, authored by Wilmington Pastor Derrick Johnson. The goals of the program are to reduce bullying, improve academic performance and decrease suspension rates. The grant will fund two five-week programs, one in the fall/winter and one in the winter/spring for students who are cultural minorities, free and reduced lunch-eligible and Wilmington city residents.

- All Red Clay elementary and middle schools (Red Clay Consolidated School District): \$122,600 for 4th to 6th Grade Partnership Institute, which will expand and deepen educator content knowledge related to the Common Core State Standards, creating vertical teams spanning fourth to sixth grades and incorporating educators from all 23 elementary and middle schools.

- Gateway Charter School (charter): \$50,922 for Expansion of Reading Workshop Model, which targets special education students among others for the reading program. It incorporates the use of technology to enhance the child's reading experience. Teacher training, parental involvement and other family literacy learning supplements the program.

"I am ecstatic about the awarding of this grant to BRINC," said Dr. Mark Holodick, superintendent of the Brandywine School District. "The four districts have spent a great deal of time developing this plan – a plan that will lead to a more

individualized approach to teaching and learning. This will include such opportunities as distance learning, online courses, and dual enrollment opportunities with higher education. This blended learning environment is enticing to students on many levels, one of which is that it empowers students to master material in a manner and at a pace that best suits their learning style. We are grateful to the Secretary and Department for their support.”